

Solid Waste and Financial Assistance Program

Contact: Cullen Stephenson, Program Manager, (360) 407-6103

Program Mission

The mission of the Solid Waste and Financial Assistance (SW&FA) Program is to reduce both the amount and the effects of wastes generated in Washington State.

Environmental Threats

The most imposing environmental threats facing the state in the next two years include pollution of the state's ground water and surface water and air that result from improperly disposing wastes. Some of the biggest toxic waste cleanup sites in Washington are former solid waste landfills that have failed to contain the hazardous materials.

Wastewater, air contaminants, and dangerous wastes generated by industrial sources produce very large volumes and remain a significant threat to Washington's environment. The industries associated with these waste streams are pulp and paper, aluminum smelting, and oil refining businesses.

The continued increase in waste caused by the state's growing population will require a shift in policy emphasis to waste reduction and prevention as a basis for sustainable solid waste management.

Authorizing Laws

- *Chapter 70.95 RCW, Solid Waste Management Act – Reduction and Recycling*
- *Chapter 70.93 RCW, the Waste Reduction, Recycling, and Model Litter Control Act*
- *Chapter 70.95C RCW, Waste Reduction*
- *Chapter 70.105 RCW, Hazardous Waste Management Act*
- *Federal Resource Conservation and Recovery Act*
- *Chapter 70.138 RCW, Incinerator Ash Residue*
- *Chapter 70.105D RCW, Model Toxics Control Act*

- *Chapter 70.95D RCW, Solid Waste Incinerators and Landfill Operators*
- *Chapter 79.95J RCW, Municipal Sewage Sludge (Biosolids)*

Constituents/Stakeholders

- *State and Local Governments*
- *Environmental Interests*
- *Private Sector*
- *Businesses*
- *Citizens*

Major Activities

The agency manages five sets of overlapping activities within the Solid Waste and Financial Assistance Program. The activities include efforts to reduce or recycle the waste stream, regulating and monitoring permitted industries, supporting state and local policy and planning, providing grants to support local governments' efforts, and employing litter pickup crews. More detail about these areas is presented below.

Waste Reduction and Recycling in Support of a Sustainable Future

The agency is in the early stages of exploring strategies that might better align the state's environmental, social, and economic imperatives. The Solid Waste and Financial Assistance Program will test practical ways to be consistent with the principles of sustainable communities. Some of these include:

State Solid Waste Plan: When completed in 2003, the revised state plan will provide a 10 year vision for reducing the amount and effect of waste and will focus efforts on waste prevention and reduction by state and local governments and citizens of the state.

Pollution Prevention (P2): The program's pollution prevention strategy centers around:

- Providing technical assistance to local governments and to contractors for reducing

- and re-using construction and demolition materials.
- Providing grants for pollution prevention initiatives by local governments, trade associations, and citizen groups.
- Providing grants for collecting moderate risk waste from households and small quantity generators, as well as reducing toxicity of the waste.
- Providing technical assistance to local governments to implement waste and toxicity reduction initiatives.
- Working with industries measuring the progress of pollution prevention plans.

Waste Reduction and Recycling Assistance: The agency provides assistance to establish and operate local recycling programs. This assistance includes technical information on collecting and processing materials, financial data, legal mechanisms, marketing options, educational materials, and relevant policy issues.

Organic Wastes Strategy: Organic wastes continue to be a major portion of the waste stream. SW&FAP will examine several portions of the organic waste stream and the new handling methods used for managing those wastes, including biosolids, composting, wastes from the agricultural industry, and land application of solid wastes.

Regulating and Monitoring Pollution

The agency is charged with establishing environmental regulations for solid waste facilities. Regulatory authorities include overseeing the siting, design, and construction of solid waste facilities to protect the state's air, land, surface, and ground waters.

The agency's Industrial Section manages all regulatory requirements for 29 of the state's largest and most complex industrial facilities. The facilities include pulp mills, aluminum smelters, and oil refineries. Achieving compliance with state and federal regulations for air, water, and waste management is the ongoing mission of this group.

Supporting Local Government Efforts

The state administers local waste reduction, recycling, and litter pick-up activities through four grant programs:

- *Coordinated Prevention Grants* provide money to local governments for planning around solid waste and moderate risk waste, enforcing solid waste regulations, monitoring ground water at landfills, and programs for reducing and recycling wastes.
- *Remedial Action Grants* help local governments pay for studying and cleaning up hazardous waste sites. Grants also help local health districts investigate suspected contaminated sites and re-establish safe drinking water supplies where drinking water has become contaminated.
- *Public Participation Grants* are provided to citizen groups and non-profit organizations to help people participate in the decisions made at hazardous waste cleanup sites. The grants also provide funding for projects that promote proper waste management practices by citizens and businesses.
- *Litter-pickup Contracts* make up 20 percent of the Waste Reduction and Litter Control Account funds, which are provided to local governments for picking up and preventing litter in their areas.

Litter Control

A litter survey completed by the agency in 2000 showed that approximately one-quarter of the litter in the state is being picked up, including 65 tons of cigarette butts, 535 tons of metal, and additional tons of plastic automotive parts, wood debris, yard debris, beverage containers and more. The volumes point to the need for prevention, not just pickup.

Litter Prevention: As a result of the data collected from the litter survey, the agency will be conducting a litter prevention campaign to focus on changing the behavior of major offenders.

Ecology Youth Corps (EYC) crews continue to pick up tremendous amounts of litter. The program is now balancing funding for pickup

efforts with the additional need to run a litter prevention campaign.

Coordinating Regional Litter Efforts: The Solid Waste and Financial Assistance Program is convening meetings among Ecology's Youth Corp, local government, and state agencies to maximize various litter pickup efforts for efficiency and effectiveness.

Major Issues

Using Waste Prevention and Reduction to Work Toward Sustainability

Washington's waste stream continues to grow. On a per-capita basis, Washington citizens generate, dispose, and litter more waste than ever before. The state Solid Waste Management Plan, currently under development, will identify ways to reduce waste generation. The litter prevention campaign, to be launched in the spring of 2002, will be a multi-media effort to stop littering. There is a continuing need for statewide public education regarding correct disposal and recycling techniques.

In 2002, the agency will adopt the revised minimum functional standards for solid waste handling. The existing solid waste regulatory structure was last revised in 1985. The purpose of the revised standards is to address changes in the handling methods for solid waste, to allow reasonable beneficial uses of some wastes, to update land application standards, and to ease the regulatory requirements on the recycling industry.

Weakening Recycling Rates

Despite an increase in recycling rates in the mid 1990s, today's recycling rate is essentially the same as it was 10 years ago. The agency will continue to explore ways to invigorate recycling, including strategies to improve residential, commercial, and agricultural recycling, data collection, and access to recycling information.

Concerns at Industrial Facilities

Energy Market: The power crunch has very real effects on Washington's industrial facilities. Aluminum smelters have shut down in

Washington awaiting more stable energy markets. Many industrial facilities are looking for ways to supply their own power. The agency will work to reduce or eliminate air pollution from some of the natural gas or diesel power alternatives.

Dioxins: Odors, the discharge of dioxin and dioxin like compounds into water, and the tremendous amount of chemicals used by the pulp and paper industry result in a high degree of public scrutiny, which increases as the state's population grows. The agency's Industrial Section is working with the pulp and paper industry to implement new federal air toxic rules and wastewater effluent limits. The current permits reduce dioxin emissions by more than 80 percent. The program is working with the mills to develop multi-media studies for possible further reductions.

Effluent Limits: There is an ongoing debate whether to adjust effluent limits relative to production volumes, or fix it at a certain level regardless of the level of economic activity. For refineries, current discharge permit (NPDES) effluent limits are tied to production in accordance with federal guidelines. The environmental community does not feel pollution should be tied to production rates, but would rather have set pollution levels that would not increase with an increase in production.

Spent Pot Liners: Spent pot liners from the aluminum industry make up one of the largest hazardous waste streams in the state. Although many ideas have been proposed for re-using and recycling them, there remains great potential for reducing this waste stream.

Local Governments Need Financial Support of Reduction and Recycling

With more than 100 programs in Washington State, curbside recycling is now available to more than 90 percent of the population. Several of the traditional commodities, including aluminum cans, glass, and newspaper, are collected. A strong collection infrastructure, supported in large part by grants to local governments, has resulted in a private sector willing to invest in the use of

recyclables. Limited resources at the local level result in criminal justice and public health taking priority over recycling. Because many counties rely on fees for dumping waste to support recycling programs, landfills moving out of their sphere of control will result in fewer dollars available. Local jurisdictions are speaking more and more about the need for a stable funding source for disposing and recycling solid wastes

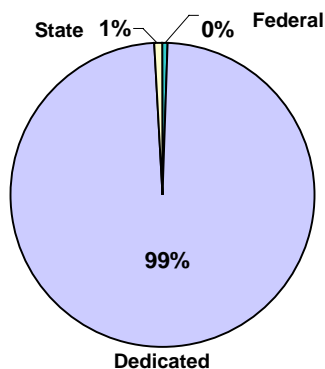
Solid Waste and Financial Assistance Program Budget

Budget: \$22,778,892; Staffing: 104 FTEs

State	(\$)	Amount	Sources	Uses
General Fund – State	214,645		Multiple	Water quality permit enforcement actions.
Federal				
General Fund – Federal	101,146		Environmental Protection Agency	Grants for product stewardship and innovative water quality permits.
Dedicated Funds				
Local Toxics Control Account	2,903,621		Hazardous substance tax	Technical assistance and grants are provided to local governments for local solid waste planning and oversight of solid waste facilities.
State Toxics Control Account	3,956,314		Hazardous substance tax; recovered remedial actions and penalties collected	Provide technical assistance to local health departments, pollution prevention initiatives, regulatory reform, industrial dangerous waste, and cleanup activities; public participation grants.
Waste Reduction/Litter Control Account	12,424,055		Litter tax	Supports the Ecology Youth Corps and other efforts to clean up litter, litter prevention campaign, (50%); recycle hotline, technical assistance in waste reduction, pollution prevention initiatives and recycling (30%); litter grants to local government (20%).
Water Quality Permit Fees	1,319,388		Permit fees collected for wastewater discharge permits	Industrial water quality permitting and inspections, sediment source control.
Air Operating Permit	1,081,116		Permit fees collected for air contaminant sources	Industrial air quality permitting, inspections, enforcement.
Biosolids Permit	478,607		Fee on sewage treatment facilities	Develop and implement the biosolids program.
Environmental Excellence	300,000		Environmental Excellence	Appropriation authority for innovative pollution reduction projects.
Capital Budget Funding: \$72,749,772				
Local Toxics Control Account	72,749,772 (<i>\$20,749,772 Reappropriation and \$52,000,000 new appropriation</i>)		Hazardous substance tax	Grants to local governments for remedial actions, coordinated prevention programs, public participation, and local hazardous waste liability.

SWFA

SWFA Program Dollars by Fund Source



SWFA Program Dollars by Activity

